

“embraces the things that are right and condemns the things that are wrong.”

More than 60 years later, that code still guides us. We call evil by its name and stand for freedom that leads to peace. Our alliance is strong. We value, more than ever, the unbroken friendship between the Australian and the American peoples. My country is grateful to you and to all the Australian people for your clear vision and for your strength of heart. And I thank you for your hospitality. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at the Australian Parliament House. In his remarks, he referred to Governor-General Michael Jeffery, Prime Minister John Howard, Speaker of the House of Representatives Neil Andrew, President of the Senate Paul Calvert, and Leader of the Opposition Simon Crean of Australia; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida’s chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and President Hu Jintao of China. Speaker Andrew referred to Senators Bob Brown and Kerry Nettle of Australia.

Statement on Senate Action To Block a Vote on Class Action Reform Legislation

October 23, 2003

Yesterday, 39 Members of the U.S. Senate blocked an up-or-down vote on a bill that would reduce frivolous lawsuits and the burden they place on our economy. The “Class Action Fairness Act” would protect the legal rights of all citizens while ensuring that court awards and settlements go to those who are wrongfully injured rather than to a few wealthy trial lawyers. Class action reform will allow businesses and their employees to go back to the business

of growing our economy and creating jobs. It was passed by the House and is favored by a large bipartisan majority in the Senate. Those who are serious about bringing an end to frivolous lawsuits in this Nation and protecting the rights of those who are wrongfully injured should strongly support this legislation. I am eager to sign it; our economy needs it; and I urge those Senators who stand in the way to let the will of the people be heard.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in Honolulu, Hawaii

October 23, 2003

Thank you all very much. Aloha! Thank you. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. If I seem a little jet-lagged—*[laughter]*—it’s because I’ve spent a long week away from home. After 8 days on the road and more than 18,000 miles in the air, it’s great to be back in America. And it’s really great to be in the beautiful State of Hawaii.

We had a great trip. I visited with some of our strongest allies in the war on terror and some of the Nation’s most important trading partners. We made progress on a broad agenda, an agenda that will help make America more secure and more prosperous.

I want to thank each of you for giving me a warm welcome home. I particularly

want to thank you for your strong support. See, what we're doing today is we're laying the foundation for a victory in Hawaii and a nationwide victory in 2004. As your Governor said, and my chairman of the campaign here said, we need more than just financial contributions. We need you talking up the campaign. We need you going to your coffee shops and your houses of worship and your community centers and reminding everybody that this administration has got an optimistic, positive, hopeful agenda for everybody who lives in America.

I'm getting ready, and I'm loosening up. [Laughter] But the political season will come in its own time. I've got a job to do. And there's a lot on the agenda in Washington. I'm going to continue, though, to work hard to earn the confidence of every American by keeping this Nation secure and strong and prosperous and free.

As we go about our work in Washington, Vice President Cheney and I are grateful for the continuing support in Hawaii. We appreciate our friends here. I also appreciate the unique contributions native Hawaiians have made to this State and to our Nation. I'm impressed by the rich culture of the native Hawaiian people. I respect our shared traditions, and I appreciate Governor Lingle's dedication to all of Hawaii's citizens. You've got a great Governor for this State.

And I've got a great wife. I'm really proud of Laura. She's a fabulous mom, a wonderful wife, and a great First Lady for our country.

And I appreciate the Lieutenant Governor, Duke Aiona. I appreciate Felix Camacho, who is the Governor of Guam, who is with us today. I want to thank the members of the statehouse who are here. We've got a lot of State representatives. The Governor was telling me she wants to increase the number in '04. Mayor Arakawa is here from Maui. Bryan Baptiste is here. I appreciate you, Mr. Mayor.

I want to thank Travis Thompson, who was our event cochairman. I want to thank

all the other cochairs for their hard work. I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here, the party chairmen, the national committeewoman. But most of all, I want to thank you all for coming. It warms our heart. This is a big crowd, and we're honored.

In the last 2½ years, our Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and to future generations. I came to seize opportunities and let—instead of letting them slip away. This administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and now they live in freedom.

Two-and-a-half years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and morale was beginning to suffer. So we increased the defense budget to prepare for the threats of a new era. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Two-and-a-half years ago, we inherited an economy in recession. And then our country was attacked. And we marched to war for our security and for peace. And we had scandals in corporate America, all of which affected the people's confidence. But we acted. We passed two tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going again, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

When Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows, and people are more likely

to find a job. We're returning more money to the people to help them raise their family. We're reducing the taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're giving small businesses incentives to expand and to hire new people. With all these actions, this administration is laying the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs across America, so every single person in this country has a chance to realize the American Dream.

Two-and-a-half years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform, but there wasn't much action. So I called for and the Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation. We've increased spending for Title I students. We've increased spending at the Federal level. But in return for increased Federal dollars, we expect results, because we believe every child can read and write and add and subtract. This administration is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. The days of excuse-making are over. We expect results in every classroom so that not one single child is left behind.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to safeguard our borders and ports and to better protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for our farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and entrepreneurs. We passed budget agreements to help maintain much needed spending discipline in Washington, DC. On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people.

The Congress gets credit. I enjoy working with our Speaker, Denny Hastert, and the majority leader, Bill Frist. They're fine people. We work together to try to change the tone in Washington, to elevate the debate, to focus on results. After all, we're there to represent the people. And those are the kind of people I have asked to

join my administration—results-oriented, decent, hard-working people from all walks of life. I have put together a fantastic administration for the American people. Our country has had no finer Vice President than Dick Cheney. Mother may have a second opinion. *[Laughter]*

In 2½ years, we have done a lot. We have come far, but our work is only beginning. I've set great goals worthy of this great Nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we must work for a society of prosperity and compassion, so that every citizen has a chance to work and to succeed and to realize the great promise of our country.

It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it.

Our war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest. We will not tire. We will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed. We are confronting that danger in Iraq, where Saddam holdouts and foreign terrorists are desperately trying to throw Iraq into chaos by attacking coalition forces and aid workers and innocent citizens. They know that the advance of freedom in Iraq would be a major defeat for the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of the United States of America. America will not be intimidated.

We're aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we will not have to face them in our own country. We're calling other nations to help build a free country in Iraq, which will make us all more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume their defense and move toward self-government. These are not easy tasks, but they are essential tasks. We will finish what we have

begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty, because free nations do not support terror, free nations do not attack their neighbors, free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. And I believe that freedom is the right of every person, and I believe that freedom is the future of every nation.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in the world. And when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, America is now committed to bringing the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children now suffering with AIDS. This great, strong, and compassionate land is leading the world in this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We face challenges here at home as well. And our actions will prove that we're equal to those challenges. Any time somebody who wants to work can't find a job, says we've got a problem. This administration will continue to create the conditions for economic growth and economic vitality, so every single citizen can find work.

We have a duty to keep our commitment to America's seniors by strengthening and modernizing Medicare. The Congress took historic action to improve the lives of older Americans. For the first time since the creation of Medicare, the House and Senate have passed reforms to increase the choices for seniors and to provide coverage for prescription drugs. They must get their differences ironed out and get a bill to my desk. The sooner they get the job done, the sooner America's seniors will get the health care they need.

For the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increase the cost of medicine. People who have been harmed by a bad

doctor deserve their day in court. Yet the system should not simply reward lawyers who are fishing for rich settlements. Frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care, and they therefore affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue that requires a national solution. The House of Representatives has passed a good bill to reform the system. The bill is now stuck in the United States Senate. The Senate must act on behalf of the American people. Senators must understand, no one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit.

I have a responsibility as your President to make sure the judicial system runs well, and I have met that duty. I have nominated superb men and women for the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. Some Members of the United States Senate are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. It is time for some Members of the United States Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

This country needs a comprehensive energy plan. You may have noticed last summer that we had a problem with the delivery of electricity in parts of our country. [Laughter] We need to modernize our systems. If we're interested in economic growth, we need a modern system, one that—we need laws that encourage investment in order to modernize the system. We need to use our technologies to encourage conservation. We need to use our technologies to enable us to explore for energy in environmentally friendly ways. But for the sake of our national security and for the sake of our economic security, we need to be less reliant on foreign sources of energy.

Our strong and prosperous Nation must also be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of compassionate conservatism by applying the best

and most innovative ideas to the task of helping our fellow citizens who are in need. There are millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on Government and become independent through hard work. We must build on the success of welfare reform to bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our fellow citizens.

Congress should complete the "Citizen Service Act" so that more Americans can serve their communities and their country. Both Houses should reach agreement on my Faith-Based Initiative to support the armies of compassion that are mentoring our children and caring for the homeless and offering hope to the addicted. This Nation should not fear faith; we ought to welcome faith into the compassion and help of citizens in need.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. We want more people owning their own home. We have a minority homeownership gap in America. I presented a plan to the United States Congress to close that gap, and I urge them to act.

We want people to own and manage their own health care plan. We want people to own and manage their own retirement account. We want more people to own their own small businesses, because in America we understand, if a person owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of this country.

In a compassionate society, people respect one another and take responsibility for the decisions they make. We're working to change the culture in this country from one that said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a new culture in which each of understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If

you're concerned about the quality of the education in your community, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you are a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees.

And in the new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves. We can see the culture of service and responsibility growing around us. I started the USA Freedom Corps to encourage Americans to extend a compassionate hand to a neighbor in need. Your response has been strong. I get reports about our faith-based and charities that are strong all across America. People want to serve our country.

Policemen and firefighters and people who wear this Nation's uniform are reminding us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes because they see them every day. In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people.

All the tests of the last 2½ years have come to the right nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:08 p.m. at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. Prior to these remarks, the President crossed the international dateline on his return flight from Australia. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Linda Lingle and Lt. Gov. James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr., of Hawaii; Mayor Alan M.

Arakawa of Maui County, HI; Mayor Bryan J. Baptiste of Kauai County, HI; Brennon Morioka, Hawaii State chairman, Travis Thompson, Hawaii national committeeman, and Miriam Hellreich, Hawaii national com-

mitteewoman, Republican National Committee; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Iraq Donors' Conference *October 24, 2003*

Today's success at the Iraq Donors' Conference marked significant progress for freedom in Iraq. I commend the 73 nations and 20 international organizations that are meeting the challenge of helping the Iraqi people recover from decades of oppression and build a better future. The contributions will help bring necessary funds, goods, and services to the Iraqi people. I especially thank President Aznar and the Government of Spain for having hosted the conference

and for having contributed so much to supporting the people of Iraq.

The world has a clear interest in a democratic Iraq because free nations do not breed the ideologies of terror. A free Iraq will serve as an example and an inspiration to advocates of reform and progress throughout the Middle East. And a free Iraq will be a source of stability and hope for that region. America appreciates the efforts of all nations that are committed to this great endeavor.

Statement on the Death of Madame Chiang Kai-shek *October 24, 2003*

Laura and I were saddened to learn of the death of Madame Chiang Kai-shek. Madame Chiang was a close friend of the United States throughout her life and especially during the defining struggles of the last century. Generations of Americans will

always remember and respect her intelligence and strength of character. On behalf of the American people, I extend condolences to Madame Chiang's family members and many admirers around the world.

Message on the Observance of Ramadan *October 24, 2003*

I send greetings to Muslims in the United States and around the world observing the holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is the holiest season in the Islamic faith, commemorating the revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammed. This month

of introspection provides Muslims a time to focus on their faith and practice God's commands. Through fasting, prayer, contemplation, and charity, Muslims around the world renew their commitment to lead lives of honesty, integrity, and compassion.